

provided to fund the operations and training of currently deployed forces, as well as provide much-needed increases for the military health care program, personnel recruiting and retention, and improvements to military housing. However, this amendment underscores the fallacy of the Majority's FY 2001 Budget Resolution adopted last week.

The Supplemental Appropriations bill does include important funding for fighting the drug war in Colombia and providing the military with adequate funding levels to pay for rising fuel costs; health care and repairing damages to military facilities caused by recent hurricanes, floods and other natural disasters is understandable. These are truly unforeseen costs.

I decided to support the Emergency Supplemental because the assistance package for Colombia is a vital priority and is clearly in our nation's fundamental interest. Colombia is the source of more than 80 percent of the cocaine and much of the heroin that enters the United States. In fact, Colombia produces 60 percent of the world's cocaine crop, an astonishing 90 percent of which makes its way to the U.S. The cost of illegal drugs to the U.S. is \$110 billion a year, and the U.S. Drug Czar, Barry McCaffrey has reported that illegal drugs account for 114,000 American deaths a year. Assisting Colombia is clearly in the interest of our Nation and especially in the interest of our Nation's youth.

In 1999, Colombia's President Pastrana unveiled a proposal, known as Plan Colombia, to address the country's drug production and civil conflict. The Government of Colombia has estimated that \$7.8 billion will be needed over the next three years to reverse the country's role as the hemispheric center for drugs, rebuild its economy, and bolster its democratic institutions.

But as we offer assistance to Colombia, it is important that we include tangible means for measuring the actions of the government-supported forces. We must ensure that the funds we provide to Colombia are utilized in a manner consistent with our national interest. That is why I supported the amendment offered by my colleague from Wisconsin, Mr. OBEY, that would have delayed funding for military hardware and training contained in the Colombia assistance package until July 15, 2000. The amendment would have provided for immediate funding of all drug interdiction efforts under the Administration's plan, but withheld military aid until sufficient review by Congress. The delay would have provided the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on International Relations, and the Select Committee on Intelligence time to hold hearings about the conflict in Colombia and the need for this kind of hardware and training before the funds are appropriated.

I believe the funding contained in the aid package should not serve as a blank check for the Colombian military to engage in actions that may violate human rights, including the killing of innocent civilians. It is important to remember that since 1987, it has been reported that more than 35,000 noncombatant civilians have been murdered or made to disappear by the Colombian security forces and their paramilitary allies. While President Pastrana has made important strides in restoring the rule of law and improving the human

rights record of the military, the U.S. should act very carefully before appropriating funds to any army with such a decidedly bloody record.

I also believe this legislation should have included drug prevention measures to reduce the demand for illegal drugs in the United States. Such an effort must be part of a comprehensive U.S. anti-drug strategy. Indeed, I find it ironic that we're considering an emergency supplemental bill in the House of Representatives whose emergency status is in part due to the production of illegal drugs in Colombia, without one dollar in the bill being used for drug prevention in the U.S.

Illegal drugs are killing our kids at an alarming rate. In 1998, five million young people in this country required treatment for drug addiction, and nearly 600,000 required an emergency room visit. In the United States, there are 1.6 million drug-related arrests annually, and over half of our prison population committed drug-related crimes. Even more disturbing, while the average age for marijuana users is increasing, heroin abusers are getting younger. The cost of drug abuse to our society is estimated to be \$110 billion per year, but it is much higher if measured in countless lives lost and young dreams broken. This problem, Mr. Chairman, is staggering. As such, I supported the motion to recommit the bill back to the Appropriations Committee with instructions that it be reported back to the full House with sufficient domestic drug prevention funding. While this effort failed, I hope the Administration and the Majority take important steps to address the demand side of the drug problem in this country. If we are to truly eradicate drugs from our streets, we must recognize that when there is a demand, there will always be a willing supplier.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I sincerely hope that, should this bill progress, the leadership will pare back spending which is not truly emergency. Much of this bill can be considered under the regular appropriations process for FY 2001. We should be reticent to completely ignore spending caps for the current fiscal year as this bill does.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 60TH
BIRTHDAY OF NEAL TRAVIS

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 4, 2000

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Neal Travis, one of New York's most celebrated newspaper columnists and writers, on the occasion of his 60th birthday.

Neal Travis' insightful analysis of the New York scene has educated and entertained those in the Big Apple for many, many years. His column in the New York Post, Neal Travis' New York, has covered all aspects of life and has attracted the attention of all segments of our society. His blend of wit, sarcasm, compassion and searing observations have inspired, motivated and always informed New Yorkers.

Born in New Zealand, Neal Travis emigrated to the United States in 1964 where he served

as a foreign correspondent for Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation. He then rose quickly up the ladder and secured his own column in the New York Post. Some 15 years after its inception, Neal Travis' New York is more popular than ever.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me today in sending our warmest congratulations to Neal Travis on his 60th birthday. Life in New York will always be more significant and exciting because of his presence and his gift with the written word.

IN HONOR OF THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BROOKLYN POLISH
AMERICAN HOME, INC.

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 4, 2000

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and celebration of the 65th Anniversary of the Brooklyn Polish American Home, Inc.

Established in 1935 when South Brooklyn was a growing community full of various ethnic backgrounds, the community felt a cultural center should be established. This center would serve, not only as a meeting place for the entire community, but as an educational tool where people could visit and learn about their own heritage and the heritage of others. Thus, the Brooklyn Polish American Home was born. The Home's objective is to further not only Polish ideals, but the ideals of the entire community; in addition it serves as a civic, social, and recreational center.

With a goal of serving the community, and with generous donations from the entire area, a parcel of land was purchased on April 10, 1935. The Home serves not only as a meeting place, but as a builder of futures for young people. The Home managed to establish a Scholarship Trust Fund, awarding grants to high school graduating seniors entering college or any other approved higher education institution. The first grant was provided in 1971, and through 1999 a total of 81 individuals had received financial assistance, totaling over \$32,200.

The Home has not been without hardships, though. Throughout the years, numerous renovations have been done to the Home. In the late 1980's, two fires caused substantial amounts of damage and had to be renovated again. As a result of the generosity and involvement of the entire Brooklyn community, sufficient funding was acquired making these extensive repairs possible. The fact that the Home was able to overcome these challenges is a testament to the character, will and stamina of the community's residents.

My fellow colleagues, I ask you to join in honoring the 65th Anniversary of the Brooklyn Polish American Home.